

New ideas fund with the Advanced Research Centre

Application Guidance Notes – November 2023



HACK the ARC – Context and overview

The Advanced Research Centre (ARC) celebrated its **first full year of operation in June 2023**. Since opening, the ARC has seen over 550 staff move into the building, hosted hundreds of collaborative events, delivered 4 public festivals, and welcomed 25,000 visitors through its doors. The level of engagement with the ARC is growing, while research and innovation in the building continues to evolve with **interdisciplinarity** and **cross-working** remaining key goals.

While the ARC has clearly made a mark, we're interested in exploring **new ways to maximise the benefits of ARC space and resource** and we want to involve colleagues in driving this. This might draw from experiences of being an ARC resident or a regular user of the building or simply from a great idea to do things differently. **HACK the ARC** is intended to try out some of these new ideas and approaches, offering **small grants of up to £2,500** to encourage **experimentation** to make the ARC an even better place to work, visit and enjoy.

HACK the ARC - Priority areas

There is a wide range of topics that HACK the ARC could tackle, and for our first edition of the fund, we would like to focus on **two priority areas** where feedback has suggested room for enrichment:

1. **'Spaces in Between'** – Much thought went into the design of spaces and facilities throughout the ARC to encourage mixing of staff and students from different teams and disciplines. While we hear some positive examples of this, we think more can be done. This could be through design elements, programming interventions or other creative ways of using physical and/or digital assets of the building, particularly throughout Levels 3 - 5. We'd therefore love to hear about hacks that **amplify and enrich connections between individuals, research teams and disciplines**.
2. **'Enhancing Porosity'** – The ARC is intended to be a resource for the whole University and wider community. Our data shows some success in this. For instance, over half the engagement activity on Level 2 is proposed by colleagues not resident in the building. Nonetheless we think there's more potential to build bridges between the ARC and the wider University community and external communities. We're particularly interested in hacks targeting **groups currently underrepresented in the ARC or research more generally**.

What might a HACK the ARC proposal look like?

In a nutshell, we ask that hacks **test creative new interventions** that tackle **one or both of the priority areas** outlined above. We want to encourage an adventurous (and of course ethical) hacker mindset to try things out and **collect data along the way**. Because of the importance of evidencing a change, we anticipate **hacks lasting several weeks or months**. It is important proposals clearly identify the **target audience** and **outcome(s)** being strived for, and in the application form we'll ask for some detail on the 'who', 'why' and 'what' relating to a proposal.

Because hacks are about demonstrating a change, we are **unlikely to support specific one-off activities** unless they yield convincing data or learning that influences a different way of working. For instance, an event series that is testing a substantially different concept or method for engagement might be of interest – as it could be evaluated and applied elsewhere. However, such a proposal would need to focus on the method rather than the topic. To give another example, we are unlikely to fund a one-off public engagement activity but would be keen to see hacks that radically challenge the public persona of the ARC, testing new approaches and generating data around what works in enhancing interaction and engagement between the ARC and external audiences.

Hacks should also **be realistic**. For instance, we can't knock down walls or repurpose whole areas of the building, and some aspects of ARC infrastructure will be harder to influence than others. However, at this stage free creativity of ideas is paramount and we **encourage potential applicants to discuss their ideas in advance** rather than assuming something won't fly, or conversely, spending time submitting an idea that just isn't practical.

I'm interested, what do I need to know?

HACK the ARC is open to **any member of staff** or **postgraduate researcher** across the University of Glasgow. While we are not presumptuous about who or where ideas might come from, we'd like to encourage colleagues who may already have suggestions for improvement through their existing experiences of the ARC. For instance 'Spaces in Between' might resonate more with colleagues who have familiarity with the social and working dynamic of the building while 'Enhancing Porosity' might interest those who have participated in collaboration activities, for instance using Level 2, or as part of the ARC's public engagement programme.

We particularly **welcome team-led proposals** that bring together different perspectives and skills, and these may for example include groups external to the University. For hacks involving more than one person, we will ask for a **lead applicant to be identified** for the purposes of communicating key information and managing budgets.

We anticipate awarding **4 to 5 awards each up to a maximum of £2,500**. Depending on the nature of ideas we receive, we may explore joint working between two or more proposals where there is clear commonality of purpose. Applicants may also bring matched funds from elsewhere to top up budgets if available and relevant. If activities involve community groups, applicants should be mindful of fair compensation for their time which will be an eligible cost. More generally, **eligible costs include:**

- Consumables and other miscellaneous expenses.
- small equipment
- printing and graphics
- data analysis and evaluation
- recompensing community participation
- catering (where directly connected with hack outcomes)

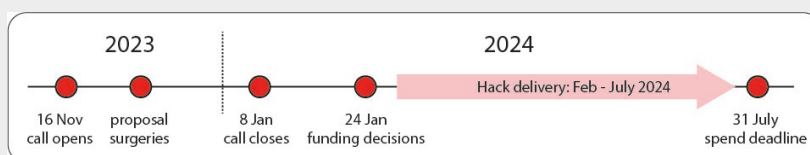
Each successful proposal will be assigned a **hack buddy**. This is someone from the HACK the ARC project team who has agreed to give support to hack teams throughout their journey. Buddies will not help deliver the activities of a hack. Rather, they are there to offer advice or signpost to information or resources around hack setup and delivery. **Important considerations that hack buddies may help with include:**

- general support with planning and delivery
- data collection and evaluation
- ethical design and, potentially, approval
- making connections with individuals or groups in the ARC, University or further afield

Successful proposals will receive funds via an **uplift to a general funds budget code** identified by the lead applicant. If your project involves a partner outside the University, it may be necessary to form a collaboration agreement which the lead applicant would take responsibility for arranging. Advice will be available from the University contracts team. More generally, if you have questions or concerns regarding these arrangements, please email us below.

Timelines and key dates

The HACK the ARC Fund will **open on Thu 16 November 2023** and **close on Mon 8 January 2024**. Decisions will be communicated on Fri 24 January 2024. The timeline, including the anticipated hack delivery period is shown below.



The application form will be online. Support surgeries for potential applications to discuss their ideas will be available in late November / early December. All the relevant information, including booking of support surgery places and access to the application form will be available through the HACK the ARC website at www.glasgow.ac.uk/hackthearc.

Funded hacks may take place over whatever period is best suited to the idea but preferably within the **first half of 2024**. Any **spend must be completed by 31 July 2024** although activities and reporting can extend beyond this if required. The following table summarises key dates and the main considerations applicants should adhere to.

Checklist for applicants	
I/we are staff or postgraduate researchers based at the University of Glasgow	✓

My/our proposal addresses one or both of the following priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaces in Between – ideas which amplify and enrich connections between individuals, research teams and disciplines in the ARC. • Enhancing Porosity – ideas that build bridges between the ARC and the wider University and/or external communities, particularly those currently underrepresented. 	✓
My/our proposal is hallmarked by experimentation, testing a new idea, approach or intervention and embeds data collection to show evidence of change.	✓
I/we can dedicate the necessary time to complete the hack preferably within the first half of 2024 and provide a brief report of the outcomes.	✓
I/we agree to publicly sharing the hack and its outputs in the spirit of an open research project (we will create an entry in the Open Science Framework OSF for this purpose)	✓

Assessment criteria for hack proposals are set out below. We are committed to an open and constructive application process and will provide feedback on unsuccessful applications.

Proposal Assessment Criteria	Weighting
Does the proposal satisfy the aim of the HACK the ARC initiative: Specifically, does it address one of the priority areas and reflect an experimental, data gathering approach?	25%
Does the proposal clearly identify the ‘who’, ‘why’ and ‘what’ being addressed by the hack?	25%
Does the proposal specify one or more outcomes and include a clear plan for data and learning collection to evidence them?	25%
Does the proposal represent an activity that is realistic to deliver, given the budget and timescale for the initiative?	25%

What happens after completion of a Hack?

When a hack has collected sufficient data to effectively assess its outcome(s), we will ask for a brief report. This may be submitted by or shortly after the 31 July 2024 and should describe the hack’s main findings (whether positive or otherwise). Because HACK the ARC is about sustained improvement to the ARC, we will **explore with hack teams the mainstreaming of interventions which show particularly promising results**. We realise it may be only a small proportion of hacks that progress to a more embedded practice and It’s important to stress that HACK the ARC is primarily an experimentation fund. We fully **accept the possibility that hacks don’t achieve their stated outcomes**. Important learning often emerges when things don’t go to plan and HACK the ARC will give the freedom and space to share such stories.

Finally, we are committed to sharing the results of HACK the ARC openly and expect each funded project to do the same. To that end, we will create a presence in the Open Science Framework (OSF) platform allowing hacks to create and share project outputs and outcomes. These may include any reports, publications or other materials emerging from hacks.

Questions?

The HACK the ARC website www.gla.ac.uk/hackthearc will be kept up to date with upcoming surgeries, funding call timelines and the application form. You can also email ARCEngage@glasgow.ac.uk with any questions (please use subject heading HACK the ARC).